



STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

KRISTI NOEM | GOVERNOR

March 31, 2022

The Honorable Adewale O. Adeyemo
U.S. Department of the Treasury
1500 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, D.C. 20220

Dear Deputy Secretary Adeyemo,

Today, the South Dakota Housing & Development Authority (SDHDA) is returning \$81.5 million in unused Emergency Rental Assistance funds. I strongly support this decision, and I wanted to take a moment to explain why South Dakota does not need these funds and what we recommend the federal government should do with them.

South Dakota has the strongest economy of any state in the nation. Our unemployment rate stands at 2.6%. We are leading the nation in personal income growth. Fewer than 2,500 South Dakotans are receiving unemployment benefits, and there are nearly 30,000 job openings statewide. With our low cost of living, low taxes, and high rates of in-migration to our state, our state's population – and our GDP – has experienced historic growth over the last two years.

As a result, the millions of dollars in rental assistance that the federal government provided to our state are simply not necessary. Our renters enjoy something even better than government hand-outs: *a job*.

Because I respected my authority as governor and did not shut my state down, our renters are in a strong position to keep paying their bills and provide a good life for their families. If renters in other states need government assistance, it is because overreaching governments took their livelihoods away, shuttered their businesses, and made it far tougher to make ends meet.

Throughout this pandemic, my administration worked closely with South Dakota's nine tribal sovereign nations. Our office looked for ways to partner with them over the last two years and provided any additional help that we could. They identified this as one

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area where we can work together. I am requesting that you reallocate \$17.9M of our leftover rental assistance funds to three of our state's tribes, broken out as follows:

1. Oglala Sioux Tribe: \$14,596,456
2. Lower Brule Sioux Tribe: \$1,679,194
3. Crow Creek Sioux Tribe: \$1,672,483

I would encourage the United States Treasury to honor this request from our tribal partners to provide them with additional needed assistance. If you have additional questions on this request, please reach out to SDHDA Executive Director Lorraine Polak.

Sincerely,



Kristi Noem
Governor

CC: The Honorable Deb Haaland, Secretary, U.S. Department of the Interior
Darryl LaCounte, Director, Bureau of Indian Affairs
Lorraine Polak, Executive Director, South Dakota Housing & Development Authority